

State of California
The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Inland Fisheries - Informational Leaflet No. 41

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OBTAINING PERMITS TO OFFER PRIZES
FOR TAKING GAME FISH IN FISHING CONTESTS

A permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Game (Department) is required to offer prizes or other inducements in fishing contests, tournaments or derbies for the taking of game fish. There are two exceptions: Permits are not required for (1) frog-jumping contests or (2) fishing contests conducted in waters of the Pacific Ocean. Game fish include the following species or species groups: white and green sturgeon; American shad; salmon and trout--all species; goldfish; common carp; hardhead; Sacramento squawfish; western sucker; catfish and bullheads--all species; striped bass; white bass; black bass and sunfish--all species; tilapia--all species; sargo; bairdiella; and orangemouth corvina.

This leaflet explains how to obtain permits to offer prizes or other inducements in fishing contests and describes conditions for issuing permits. Questions should be directed to one of the Department's regional offices. Their addresses, phone numbers and the counties in each region are printed in this leaflet.

How to Obtain Permits

You must obtain either of two types of permits to conduct a fishing contest in which anglers take a game fish species: (1) an Event Permit for each contest where either the number of participants exceeds 50 or the total of all prizes and inducements exceeds \$1,000 or (2) an Annual Permit for contests conducted by a single sponsor where, on each occasion, the number of participants does not exceed 50 and the total value of all prizes and inducements does not exceed \$1,000. Apply for either type of permit on Form 775. Forms are available from the Department's regional offices. Fill out the application completely and sign it. You must submit Event Permit applications and the required fee (check or money order payable to the Department of Fish and Game) to the Department's regional office in whose region the contest will (or primarily) be held. Applications for Annual Permits and the required fee may be submitted to any of the six regional offices or to the address on this leaflet.

Prepared by Inland Fisheries Division, December 1987; revised July 1990, January 1991, October 1992, April 1996, December 1996, January 1999, February 2001, April 2002, and April 2003. This leaflet replaces Information Leaflets Nos. 38 and 39.

Terms and Conditions

Section 230, Title 14, of the California Code of Regulation (CCR) contains the regulations governing game fish contests. It is the responsibility of the contest sponsor to follow all applicable laws and regulations and any special conditions established by the Department to protect the welfare of fish populations or individual fish.

An Annual Permit may be issued if the number of participants on each occasion does not exceed 50 and the total value of all prizes or inducements on each occasion does not exceed \$1,000. Annual Permits are good for one calendar year. Applicants must list on the application all proposed contests by date, name of water, planned weigh-in site and target species or species group of the contest. There is no limit on the number of contests that may be conducted under an Annual Permit. However, the standard administrative fee will be charged for each complete or incomplete set of 12 contests covered under an individual permit. Contests conducted under Annual Permits are not precluded from taking place by contest approved under Event or other Annual permits for the same dates and individual waters.

An Event Permit is required if either the number of participants exceeds 50 or the total value of prizes and inducements exceeds \$1,000. Only one contest for which an Event Permit has been issued may be held for the same species, on the same day, on individual water. Also, contests covered under an Event Permit for an individual water shall be three consecutive days duration or less. Please note: the three-day limitation does not apply to Event Permit contests in which fish from two or more individual waters may be entered; such contests include weekly, monthly, etc. "big fish" derbies. Moreover, multi-water contest do not preclude the issuance of Event Permits for individual waters for the same dates and involving the same game fish species.

If two or more applicants have requested an Event Permit for the same species, date and individual water, the application received first by the appropriate regional office will be given priority.

Applicants should note that Section 2003 of the Fish and Game Code authorizes the Department to issue permits for fishing contests if it determines there would be no detriment to the resource. Therefore, permits may be denied, or special conditions may be applied to the permit to insure that the resource is not harmed. Some denials or special conditions are applied seasonally on some waters. Since special conditions or denial may alter the sponsor's plans, sponsors are encouraged to obtain permits prior to advertising the contest.

Permit Issuance Procedures

General

A non-refundable administrative fee is required to be submitted with each application. All appropriately submitted applications for permits will be date-stamped to insure orderly processing. Regional Managers and the Chief of the Fisheries Programs

Branch, or their designees, have the authority to approve Annual Permits. Event Permits must be approved by the Regional Manager, or their designee, of the region in which the contests is proposed.

Permits are nontransferable. The Department may assign a State employee to observe and monitor activities at any contest. If an observer is assigned, a fee of \$100 per day may be charged, and one or more days of Department observation may be required. The exact dates for observation and monitoring will be determined by the issuing region and will not be revealed to the public or the contest sponsor prior to the scheduled contest dates. The sponsor will be notified of any observer assignments(s) on the approved permit. Non-receipt of the observer fee may result in cancellation of the permit. AN APPLICATION AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE FEE MUST REACH THE APPROPRIATE REGIONAL OFFICE AT LEAST 30 DAYS BEFORE THE CONTEST IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN; OBSERVER FEES (\$100/DAY) MUST REACH THE APPROPRIATE REGIONAL OFFICE PRIOR TO THE CONTEST BEGINNING.

Department observers may be assigned to observe and monitor contests at any time (and not charge an observer fee); the dates and times for such assignments may or may not be revealed prior to the scheduled contest date(s).

IMPORTANT: A valid contest permit must be in possession of the contest sponsor or his/her representative and be available for inspection by Department personnel at the contest site during all hours of the contest.

Application for Current Year Contests

Permits for contests proposed for the current year will be considered and issued in the order that the applications are received. If an Event Permit has already been issued for a particular water and date(s), the application will be returned to the sender within 14 calendar days.

Application for Following Year Contests

Applications for permits may not be accepted prior to July 1 of the year preceding the calendar year in which the contest(s) is (are) proposed (Section 230, Title 14, CCR). Any mail-in applications received prior to July 1, for following year contests, will be returned to the sender within 14 calendar days. Applications received on the first business day after July 1, for following year contests, will be considered and processed in the order received.

Application for Exemptions to Angling Regulations.

The Department, as part of event permit conditions, may authorize an exemption to black bass angling regulations which impose an increased minimum size limit larger than 12 inches, a slot size limit, or a reduced bag limit. An exemption will be issued only with Event Contest Permits (FG775) and included on the "*Special Conditions for Contests Conducted under Annual or Event Permits*" appended to black bass contest

permits. Nothing in the regulations governing game fish contests prevents sponsors of contests with 50 or less participants and offering prizes and inducements of \$1,000 or less, from applying for and receiving an Event Permit. The exemption allows a participating angler to weigh-in not more than five black bass greater than 12 inches total length. Each participating angler is required to have in possession during the contest hours written identification issued by the sponsor (i.e. weigh-in slip) that includes the following: 1) Name of contest sponsor; 2) Name of participating angler; 3) Contest permit number; 4) Date of contest; and 5) Contest location and weigh-in site. Contest sponsors should contact the Department region issuing the permit for specific information on applicable waters and additional requirements.

Movement of Live Fish

To prevent the movement of live fish from one body of water to another, the Department may establish permit conditions governing the movement of live fish associated with tournament activities (Section 230 (d) (2) CCR Title 14).

Application Considerations

Processing (Administrative) Fee

The application processing fee for each Annual Permit provides for up to 12 contests. Each additional set of 12 or fewer contests will require an additional application and processing fee. The application processing fee for each Event Permit covers only one contest. The processing fee varies each year and is determined using an inflation factor. The processing fee is nonrefundable.

The Department may waive the fee if the contest, tournament, or derby is for persons under the age of 16, or who are physically or mentally challenged, the primary purpose of the contest is to introduce young anglers to, or educate them about fishing and the total value of all prizes or inducements does not exceed five hundred dollars (\$500).

Falsification of Intent in Obtaining Event Permits

It is unlawful to possess a permit obtained by fraud or deceit (Section 1052, Fish and Game Code). Submitting applications for Event Permits for the specific purpose of "tying-up" or preventing other potential applicants from conducting or planning to conduct the contest as proposed is not consistent with State law.

Reports

All sponsors of fishing contest (both Event and Annual Permit holders) are required by law to complete and return a report (Form FG 776 or 776b, or equivalent) to the Department for each permitted contest. The Department will transmit the required forms with each approved permit. All questions on the form must be answered and returned to the appropriate office within 30 calendar days after the completion of each

contest. Failure to return the required reports may result in cancellation of existing permits or denial of future permits.

Change in Contest Date or Location

Change in date, water or weigh-in site for contests covered under either permit type will be considered provided the issuing region is notified in a timely manner and the proposed change(s) do not conflict with another contest. A telephone call to the appropriate regional office may be sufficient, but a written request may be required depending on the extent of the proposed change(s). It is important that Event Permit changes be requested not less than 30 days before the earlier of the originally scheduled contest dates or the proposed new contest dates. Change in Event Permit plans may require a new application and processing (administrative) fee, depending on the extent of the proposed change(s), and will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Thus, Event Permit sponsors should be very certain about their contest plans before filing application. An Event Permit contest may not be conducted on any date(s), on any waters or at any weigh-in site not specified on the permit, to do so will result in cancellation of the current permit and could result in denial of future permits.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
Regional Offices

Northern California and North Coast
Region
601 Locust Street
Redding, CA 96001
(530) 225-2300

San Joaquin Valley and Southern Sierra
Region
1234 Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 243-4005

Del Norte
Humboldt
Lassen
Modoc
Shasta
Siskiyou
Tehama
Trinity

Fresno
Kern
Kings
Madera
Mariposa
Merced
Stanislaus
Tulare
Tuolumne

Sacramento Valley and Central Sierra
Region
1701 Nimbus Road
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
(916) 358-2900

South Coast Region
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90702
(562) 342-7153

Alpine
Amador
Butte
Calaveras
Colusa
El Dorado
Glenn
Placer
Plumas
Sacramento
San Joaquin
Sierra
Solano
Sutter
Yolo
Yuba

Los Angeles
Santa Barbara
Ventura
San Diego
Orange
Eastern Sierra and Inland Deserts
Region
4775 Bird Farm road
Chino Hills, CA 91709
(909) 597-9823

Central Coast Region
P.O. Box 47
Yountville, CA 94599
(707) 944-5500

Mono
San Bernardino
Imperial
Inyo
Riverside

Alameda
Contra Costa
Lake
Marin
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San Luis Obispo
San Mateo
Santa Clara
Santa Cruz
Sonoma